Shadow by BroadwayItBitch

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Summary:

Mike has always felt like he was in a shadow. Not really like if he were to live up to a relative, but he felt like he was left out. Forgotten. He barely hung out with Dustin, Lucas, or the rest of the Party. He was alone.

He has no intention of telling them this. Everyone had their own problems after what happened. No one cared for what he had to say.

Shadow

Author's Note:

enjoy I guess.

TW: Self-harm.

The self-harm scene isn't too graphic, but if it triggers you, don't read.

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Mike was out shopping for Christmas stuff. His parents were out of town with Holly and Nancy was looking for colleges in Iowa.

His parents left him money for food and they checked in every couple hours by calling him.

Mike grabbed a bottle of apple juice from the shelf. It was Holly's favorite brand, and she might want some when she gets back.

"Hey, Mike!" Someone calls. Mike freezes when he realizes that the 'someone' is Will Byers, walking up to him.

“Um… h-hey, Will,” Mike meekly says.

“It’s been awhile since we’ve hung out,” The smaller boy points out.

“I know, I’ve just been babysitting Holly.”

It’s a half-lie. Mike has been taking care of Holly when his parents and Nancy were out, but it was a reason to not hang out.

“Me and the others are going for ice cream at Scoops Ahoy. Wanna join?” Will asks.

“I… um… I can’t, I need to finish a project,” Another lie.

Will’s face drops. “Oh. Okay.”

Will walks away, his head low.

The sight burns at Mike’s heart. He does care about Will and the others, he really does. But he needs his space.

Mike was staying home today. He called his mom that he wasn't feeling well, and she called into the school to call him in. Yes, he wasn't really sick, he just didn't want to face the Party.

As he lays on his bed, he opens his desk drawer, taking out a pack of cigarettes and his green lighter. He's just started smoking since his parents left. He bought a pack and lighter earlier that week, curious on how it tasted.

He flicks open the lighter, lighting a flame and instantly putting it out. Mike then takes a cigarette out of the pack and lights it.

The toxen fills his lungs. He feels like the stress is going away. He blows the smoke out, the tense feeling in his chest leaving.

When the cig was done, Mike rolls up his sleeve. His arm was littered in circular burn scars. Since he's been smoking, he's put the cigarettes out on his arms.

He presses the ash to his forearm, the pain not really phasing him. Mike places the butt into his soda can, so his parents won't notice.

Then he hears a knock at the door. He gets up and rolls his sleeve down, walking to the front door.

When he opens it, he's surprised to see Will.

“Hey,” Will greets with a slight smile.

Mike’s eyes widen. “What’re you doing here?”

“I brought your homework. I noticed you weren’t in school,” Will says, holding up a folder and handing it to Mike.

“Thanks,” He says.

The tense feeling is back. He needs a cigarette NOW!

“Well, um… see you later,” The taller boy says, attempting to close the door, but Will stops it with his foot.

“Mike, wait.”

Mike has no choice to keep the door open.

“Can I come in?”

Mike wants to slam the door, but he decides to let Will inside.

“We’ve been worried about you. I just wanna know if you’re okay,” Will says as soon as he’s in the foyer.

“I’m fine. Just been stressed out.”

Will’s eyes soften. “You don’t have to lie to me. I know you’ve been avoiding us.”

The smaller boy places a hand on Mike’s shoulder.

Everyone had a different level of comfort to Mike. Lucas was slightly pushy to get answers, Dustin did his best to be compassionate, El wasn’t sure of what to do, Max was understanding, yet stubborn.

And Will was patient. Not rushing, just hearing the person out.

“Please, Mikey. I just want to help.”

Mike decides to come clean. He hates lying to his best friend.

They sit on the couch. Mike feels safe with Will.

“Do you ever feel like you’re in a shadow? Like no one sees you?” Mike asks. “I-I’ve been feeling like this for awhile.”

Will grabs Mike's shaking hands. "It's okay. I'm right here."

Mike takes a shaky breath.

"It's just… I've felt depressed and it's never gone away. I feel like it's eating away at me, like I can't come out of it and I don't want it anymore."

Will thinks about what to ask.

"And I started avoiding you guys so I could put it back together, but I can't," Mike starts to break down, his eyes becoming glossy. "I need help, Will."

Will wraps an arm around his friend. "Hey, I'm not going anywhere, Mikey. I'm staying right here," He says.

Tears start to form in Mike's eyes, and he instantly wipes them away.

"I need help, please help me," He pleads.

"Hey, look at me, Mike," The crying teen obeys. "You are amazing. You are caring, you are brave. You are the best thing that has possibly happened to me and the others."

Will cups the sides of Mike's face with his hands, rubbing his cheeks.

"You are allowed to feel this way. If anyone says otherwise, they're crazy," Will says with confidence.

Mike collapses into Will. The tears that have been building up for the past few minutes just beginning to flow out.

"I'm messed up, Will," He sobs.

"Everyone is messed up in their own way. And it may be scary, but it's okay."

Mike weakly nods. "It's okay," He repeats.

"What do you need me to do? I'll do anything thing for you."

The sobbing teen wipes the tears away. "Just hold me."

Will hugs him tighter. "I got you, baby."

Mike may feel like he's in a shadow, but he has Will. He's not out of the woods, but he'll get there.

Author's Note:

Hope you all enjoyed! I know the self-harm bit was a plothole kinda, but I felt depressed when I wrote this, and I was close to hurting myself and I felt inspired from that. Omg, I'm the worst person ever. Oh! I've been working on Beyond: Two Souls, so chapter 8 might be done before New Years!

Love, Abbey Elizabeth.